

Town of Wilbraham Protocol for the Management of Mosquitoes and Plan to Reduce the Risk of West Nile Virus

Board of Selectmen/Board of Health recommended guidelines

June 12, 2001

The town subscribes to recommendations as issued by the State Department of Public Health. The statewide toll-free number for resident report and inquiry as well as Board of Health report is: **1-866-MASS WNV (1-866-627-7968)**.

Press 1 – to report a dead bird

Press 2 - if you are a medical provider

Press 3- to hear information about the West Nile Virus

Press 4- to hear information about families and West Nile Virus

Press 5- to hear information about the safe use of pesticides.

The state website at the Department of Public Health is: <http://www.state.ma.us/dph/>.

The website will post current information by locale including the incidence of dead bird clusters by city/town.

You will also find on the MDPH website, a weekly surveillance report that lists the State Laboratory's testing results for West Nile Virus in Massachusetts. Additional information can also be found on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website at : <http://www.cdc.gov/>.

MOSQUITO ASSESSMENT

(A complete copy of the assessment findings; initial report – 5/97 and final report – 9/97 is on file in the Selectmen's Office)

The Town of Wilbraham contracted with the Department of Entomology, University of Massachusetts to accomplish a Mosquito Assessment in town in the spring of 1997 and launched a town-wide treatment plan early that summer. Mosquito larval densities were noted and the town responded by treating vernal pools and town owned land with *Bacillus Thuringiensis Israelensis* or BTI floating sustained-release larvicide for long term biological control of mosquito and psychodid fly larvae. Town catch basins were treated with the same product in granular form (Aquabac Granules). Residents were invited to obtain the BTI Briquets, MSDS Safe Handling sheets and public education materials for private property treatment of mosquito larvae. The Mosquito Control Program was initiated in 1997 by the Board of Selectmen/Health to mitigate mosquito populations for nuisance control. The program has been modified to react to the threat of West Nile Virus, as directed by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health. The state expects WNV to pose a health threat for another 1-2 years and then settle into a quiescence stage for a number of years, when it will pose no threat at all.

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MOSQUITO CONTROL PROJECT

The BTI briquets are available all summer for residents and the town treats town-owned property twice during the breeding season. Town catch basins are cleaned each spring and treated with larvicide by the town's Department of Public Works. The Superintendent of Streets is also state licensed as a pesticide applicator.

Local Board of Health information regarding this project and the town's plan to reduce the risk of West Nile Virus can be obtained by calling (413) 596-8111. You may also tune to the Wilbraham Public Access government bulletin board at Channel 63 for informational updates, or visit the town's website at <http://www.ci.wilbraham.ma.us/>. Public Health Fact Sheets are also available in the Selectmen's Office during business hours, Monday through Friday 8:30 A.M. – 4:30 P.M..

PROBABILITY OF INCIDENCE FOR WEST NILE VIRUS

In temperate areas of the world, such as New England, West Nile Virus infection cases occur primarily from late summer through early fall.

To date, there is no documented incidence of West Nile Virus in humans in Massachusetts. The only documented incidence of the virus has occurred in birds. Although any mosquito species can become a virus vector (transmitter of the virus), the primary species is the urban mosquito, the *Culex* spp. This mosquito, not surprisingly, loves to feed on birds. Humans and equines are bitten incidentally. Dogs and cats are not usually targeted by the *Culex* spp.

There are no vaccines for West Nile Virus. The best way to protect yourself is to keep mosquitoes from biting you.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR PERSONAL PROTECTION

- Avoid outdoor activities between dusk and dawn, if possible, as this is the time of greatest mosquito activity.
- If you must be outdoors when mosquitoes are active, wear a long sleeved shirt and long pants. Use mosquito repellent that contains DEET (the chemical N-N-diethyl-metatoluamide) and follow the directions on the label. DEET can be poisonous if overused. Never use DEET on infants. Avoid using repellents with DEET concentrations above 10-15% for children and with concentrations above 30 – 35% for adults. Cream, lotion or stick formulas are best for use on the skin. Avoid products with high amounts of alcohol because they may be absorbed through the skin.
- Take special care to cover up the arms and legs of children playing outdoors. When you bring a baby outdoors, cover the baby's carriage or playpen with mosquito netting.
- Fix any holes in your screens and make sure they are tightly attached to all doors and windows.

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES FOR ELIMINATING MOSQUITO BREEDING ON YOUR PROPERTY AND IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD

Populations of the primary West Nile Virus mosquito vector species *Culex spp.* (*container breeders*), and the risk of infected mosquitoes, can be significantly decreased in any area by reducing the amount of standing water available for mosquito breeding.

- Dispose of or regularly empty any metal cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots and other water holding containers (including trash cans) on your property.
- Pay special attention to discarded tires that may have collected on your property. Tires are a common place for mosquitoes to breed.
- Drill holes in the bottom of recycling containers that are left outdoors, so that water can drain out.
- Clean clogged roof gutters; remove leaves and debris that may prevent drainage of rainwater.
- Turn over plastic wading pools and wheelbarrows when not in use.
- Do not allow water to stagnate in birdbaths; aerate ornamental pools or stock them with fish.
- Keep swimming pools clean and properly chlorinated; remove standing water from pool covers.
- Use landscaping to eliminate standing water that collects on your property.

WEST NILE VIRUS BIRD REPORTING AND SUBMISSION

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES

Report dead birds to the WNV Information Line at 1-866- MASS WNV (627-7968). The Massachusetts Department of Public Health staff person assisting you will ask you questions about the bird you are reporting. This reporting line is operational on weekdays only (9 A.M. – 5 P.M.). If you would like to report a bird found at night or on the weekend, call the WNV reporting line to report the find and call the Wilbraham Police Department at 596-3837 so that the town's Health Agent can respond.

If the bird has been dead for more than 24 hours and not refrigerated, or exhibits any obvious signs of decomposition (i.e. its eyes are not intact or visible, or there are maggots or flies present), the bird may not be submitted for testing (unsatisfactory).

If the Department of Public Health determines that the bird is to be submitted for testing, a case number will be given over the phone and must be written on the bag containing the bird. That number will also be used on the form prepared by the health agent when collecting the sample. If instructed to submit a bird sample to the MDPH, please bring the bagged sample to the Wilbraham Police Department, which serves as the town's collection point for this program. The department will notify the Health Inspector who will package and dispatch the bird for delivery. Police Department personnel will only accept those birds identified with a Health Department issued case number. Do not take dead birds to the Police Department unless instructed to do so.

The DPH will return a call to you for pick up only if it is determined that testing is needed in the area. Regardless of whether or not, your bird is submitted for testing, the Department of Public Health will post all information received on their website. The local Board of health will be alerted and the western Massachusetts DPH in Northampton will be alerted.

If a bird is sent to the lab for testing which results in a positive find for WNV, the local Board of Health will be notified and the finding will be posted on the state website. If the result is negative for WNV, the result will also be posted on the website.

DISPOSAL OF DEAD BIRDS NOT SUBMITTED FOR TESTING

SUGGESTED GUIDELINES

Do not touch a bird with bare hands. Use double plastic bags to dispose of any bird not being submitted for testing. Once sealed in the double plastic bags, a dead bird can be placed in the trash. Hands should be washed thoroughly with soap and water immediately following disposal.

ADOPTED: Board of Selectmen / Board of Health 6/12/2001
AMENDED:
APPROVED: Board of Selectmen/ Board of Health 6/12/2001
ATTACHMENT:
FORM: